MyWelch: Building an Information Portal System in a Medical Library Environment

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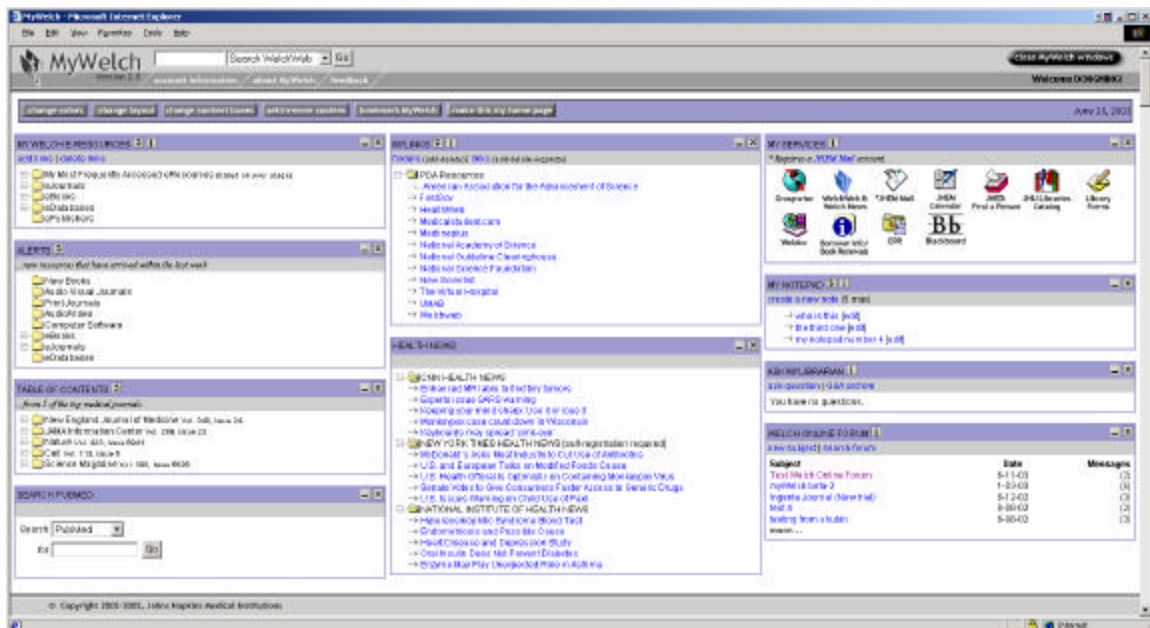Welch Medical Library, School of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland

Abstract

MyWelch is a medical library portal system that users can use to create customized web sites that reflect their research needs and personal interests. In the MyWelch environment, faculty and students are empowered to take a greater role in identifying their needs and determining their requirements in the electronic environment. The portal system also facilitates interaction among library users and staff.

Description

Web-based library portal systems in the academic environment began emerging in 1998 and are still quite new in many academic library settings. MyWelch is a Web-based portal system that employs the latest technology to make the Web environment more interactive and efficient for library users, while at the same time providing them with the flexibility to personalize and customize their Web-based information environments. MyWelch at the Welch Medical Library of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (JHMI) is one such academic library portal systems.

Overwhelmed by an increasing number of library electronic resources and other Internet sources, Web users need the ability to customize their online experience and resources, and medical science users in particular want to quickly and easily access exactly what they need. In July 2002 the library launched MyWelch, a customizable Web portal system, to provide information services to its users. The system not only allows users to create a customized list of journals, e-books and databases through subject mapping, but also includes secured access with LDAP authentication, search functions such as embedded PubMed search and Google search, current health news, table of contents (TOC) from top medical journals, online forums, links to campus resources and systems, selected research links, space for personal links and notes, and an ask-a-librarian function. By February 2003 the system has close to 1,500 user accounts, with an average of more than 20 daily user sessions and 5,000 page views; more users accounts are being added daily.

https://mywelch.welch.jhmi.edu